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Historical Geography on a Regional Basis. By Ernest W. Dann.

Vol. II, Europe. xi and 215 pp., 7 Maps, List of Authorities, and Index.
J. M. Dent & Co., London. 1908.

Three main factors, the regional, the political, and the chronological, are involved in the study of historical geography. In the two volumes of which this is the second, Mr. Dann correlates the physical with the human; in other words, he shows, with a commendable effort to avoid exaggeration, how far geographical conditions have affected the march of history in a given area. He reviews in the present volume the past history of different parts of Europe in the light of their geography. This method of teaching history will commend itself to all geographers and especially to the large number who now more than ever before are correlating the facts concerning man and his environment. The excellent black and white maps use various symbols to show elevations above the sea and contours for ocean depths.

In the Land of Pearl and Gold. A Pioneer's Wanderings in the Backblocks and Pearling Grounds of Australia and New Guinea. By Alexander Macdonald. xi and 318 pp., and 17 Illustrations. Blackie & Son, London, Glasgow, Dublin, Bombay, 1907. (Price, 10s. 6d.)

These sketches are little pictures of life in Australia and British New Guinea, of no profound significance, but interesting and valuable as affording glimpses of pioneer conditions in some out-of-the-way corners of the world. The book is anecdotal and conversational in large part, but there are also solid description and explanation. The following quotation may correct some inaccurate impressions of the work at the famous pearlings grounds off the north coast of Australia:

Many people imagine that pearlting, like gold-mining or diamond-digging, is in the main a speculative concern, in which failure to obtain the gem means ruin. As a matter of fact, pearls play quite a secondary part in this attractive industry. It is the shell that forms the remunerative commodity of these waters, pearls are indeed too scarce in themselves to attract the fortune hunter. Many hundreds of shells may be opened before one pearl is found and I have known instances where the jewel has not been seen throughout a whole season. So long, however, as mother of pearl commands the price it has done these many years, there will be few failures among the fleets.

The author says that the work is rarely carried on at a depth of over 15 fathoms. The bivalves are numerous in deeper waters, but no diver can endure the enormous pressure sustained on the lower beds. There are no white divers employed in the work on this coast, and the natives always use the diving dress, for the waters abound in sharks.

The book is illustrated by excellent full-page half-tones.

Berlin and its Environs. Handbook for Travellers. By Karl Baedeker. Third Edition. x and 247 pp., 6 Maps, 19 Plans, and Index. Karl Baedeker, Leipzig, 1908. (Price, M. 3.)

As the greatest purely modern city in Europe, Berlin has its special and characteristic interest. The imposing imperial and national edifices and the great public collections are described with particular attention, and many other objects of interest to the cultivated traveller have been selected for special treatment. The sub-division of the large plan of Berlin into three sections of different colours facilitates reference, and a plan of the inner town on a larger scale has been added to the present edition.